

Your council tax and business rates explained 2008–09



Contents

This booklet sets out the council's spending plans and information on council tax and business rates for 2008/09

Priorities for our city	2
An improving council	2
How the council works	3
Spending and the council tax 2008/09	4
How the council tax is calculated	5
How does Bristol's council tax compare?	6
Spending on services and government funding	7
How does the council plan to spend the money	8
Why has council spending increased over last year?	9
Facts about your council tax bill	10
Facts about business rates	13
Paying your council tax or business rate	17
Key council services	19
Avon Fire Authority	21
Avon and Somerset Police	24
Other information	
Benefit fraud	17
Community Legal Service Direct	28
Looking for a service for children	29
Everyone active	30

This leaflet is available in large print, Braille,
on audio-tape or in different languages.

Telephone 0117 975 5785, **Fax** 0117 975 5730

Textphone 0117 975 5785

email communication.taxation@bristol.gov.uk
to obtain the version you want

For information online look for the  symbol



Priorities for our city



This year's budget is focused on delivering four key priorities.



An Improving council

Bristol City Council has been awarded a two star rating and described as “improving well” by the Audit Commission in their latest Comprehensive Performance Assessment.

The table below summarises the council's “scores” for key areas of its work – and shows the real progress the authority has made over the past 3 years.

	2007	2006	2005
Use of Resources	3	3	2
Benefits	3	3	3
Children and Young People	2	1	1
Culture	3	2	1
Environment	2	2	2
Housing	2	3	2
Social care (adults)	3	2	2

For more information on the Audit Commission report visit www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/content/press-releases/2008/feb/CPA2007.en

How the council works?

Making decisions

The people of Bristol are represented on Bristol City Council by 70 elected councillors – two for each of the city's 35 electoral areas (wards). Annually, these councillors elect a leader and executive members from amongst their number to form a cabinet. The Cabinet provides accountable leadership to the city and takes key policy decisions on behalf of the council.

📄 www.bristol.gov.uk/cabinet

All councillors meet throughout the year to agree major policy issues not delegated to the Cabinet including the priorities, budget and council tax set out in this booklet. Councillors also serve on regulatory committees dealing with planning applications, licensing matters and public rights of way. Cabinet, council and regulatory meetings are held in public. Residents and local businesses have a right to make submissions about important issues to these meetings.

📄 www.bristol.gov.uk/meetings

Delivering services

On a day-to-day basis, services are run by officers employed by the council. These employees will be organised under seven main departments, each headed by a chief officer. These departments are Adult Community Care; Chief Executive's; Children and Young People's Services; Central Support Services; Culture and Leisure Services; Neighbourhood and Housing Services, and Planning, Transport and Sustainable Development.

📄 www.bristol.gov.uk/services

📄 www.bristol.gov.uk/management

Monitoring progress

Councillors also serve on scrutiny commissions and select committees that advise the Cabinet and chief officers on policy, monitor services and hold the Cabinet to account for its decisions. 📄 www.bristol.gov.uk/scrutiny

The public also plays an important role in scrutinising services by taking part in consultations and giving feedback through our “fair comment” system.

Spending and the council tax 2008/09

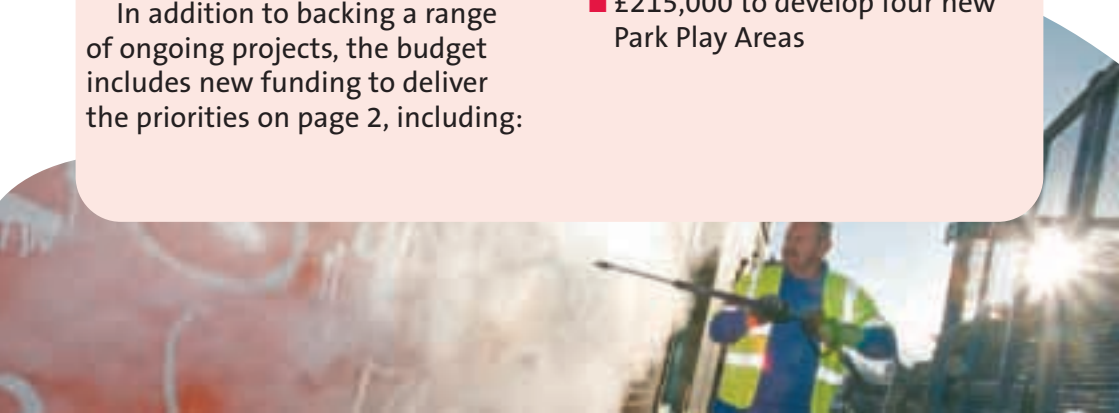
The city council has set a council tax of £1,272.00 at band D for 2008/09. This is an increase of 4% over 2007/08. When the amounts required by the police and fire authorities are added to this, a total tax of £1,482.33 will be due for a band D property.

The average council taxpayer in Bristol pays approximately 75% of a band D council tax.

As well as providing for pay and price inflation, the council's budget for 2008/09 includes a net increase in spending on services of £8.7million, after taking account of efficiency savings across all services and other adjustments amounting to some £6.5million. The overall budget is funded by an above average increase in central government grant, the availability of one off resources (mainly council tax collection fund surplus) and the 4% increase in council tax - well within government target levels.

In addition to backing a range of ongoing projects, the budget includes new funding to deliver the priorities on page 2, including:

- An extra £2.4million to help older and disabled people to live independently
- Almost £1.5million to ensure safer streets and tackle crime, including an extra 42 PCSOs
- Around £2.2million to support young disabled people and “looked after” children
- £650,000 to brighten up local neighbourhoods
- £400,000 to improve grounds maintenance
- Almost £430,000 to boost leisure and cultural services new library in Whitchurch, extra funding for programme at Colston Hall and Harbour Festival
- £250,000 to make Bristol more inclusive by tackling inequality
- £320,000 to meet the full costs of waste collection and recycling services
- £200,000 to ensure a healthier city through an Active Bristol campaign
- £215,000 to develop four new Park Play Areas

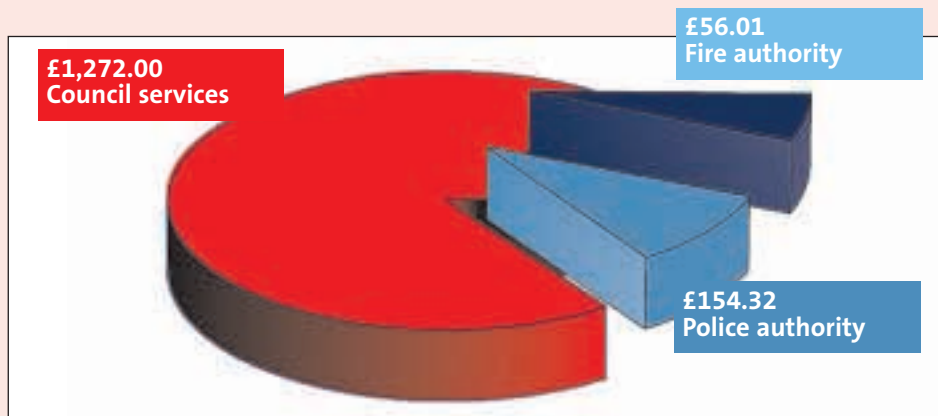


How the council tax is calculated

The council decides how much it needs to spend on all the services for the coming year, taking account of the need for services and the impact on the council tax. It then deducts the amount it expects to raise in income from services and the contribution from central government. This leaves the amount that needs to be raised through the council tax. For 2008/09 this is £167.1m.

The sum is then divided by the city's taxbase. This is the total number of properties in each of the eight valuation bands, adjusted to a band D equivalent and to allow for discounts and the predicted collection rate. The taxbase for 2008/09 is 131,384.

Together with the amounts which are required by the police and fire authorities, this produces the total council tax to be set and collected by the council. In 2008/09 the total tax will be made up as follows:



Depending on which valuation band your property has been placed in by the Valuation Office, and subject to any discounts, the amount you will actually be required to pay is set out on the following page.

Further information on the spending plans of the police and fire authorities is included on pages 21-23 and pages 24-27.

Band	Proportion of Band D	Bristol City Council	Police authority	Fire authority	Total
		£	£	£	£
A	6/9	848.00	102.88	37.34	988.22
B	7/9	989.33	120.03	43.56	1,152.92
C	8/9	1,130.67	137.17	49.79	1,317.63
D	9/9	1,272.00	154.32	56.01	1,482.33
E	11/9	1,544.67	188.61	68.46	1,811.74
F	13/9	1,837.33	222.91	80.90	2,141.14
G	15/9	2,120.00	257.20	93.35	2,470.55
H	18/9	2,544.00	308.64	112.02	2,964.66

How does Bristol's council tax compare?

Bristol's band D council tax for 2007/08 (including the amounts required by the police and fire authorities) is 47th highest in the country, 7.8% above the national average. This reflects historically high spending relative to

government funding levels on education and social services. The tax rate in Bristol, compared to the national picture, in recent years is shown in the diagram below.

In terms of the average council tax, based on the total number of chargeable properties, Bristol's tax is around 2% below the national average.



The council's medium term financial plan 2007-2010 currently provides for a council tax increase

of 3.5% in 2009/10, well below the government guideline.



Spending on services and government funding

The council's net spending is financed by support from the government, with the balance being met by the council taxpayer. Support from the government is through the formula grant. This is paid to the council as a contribution towards its total spending and comprises the national non-domestic rate (the "business rate") and a general grant, known as the revenue support grant.

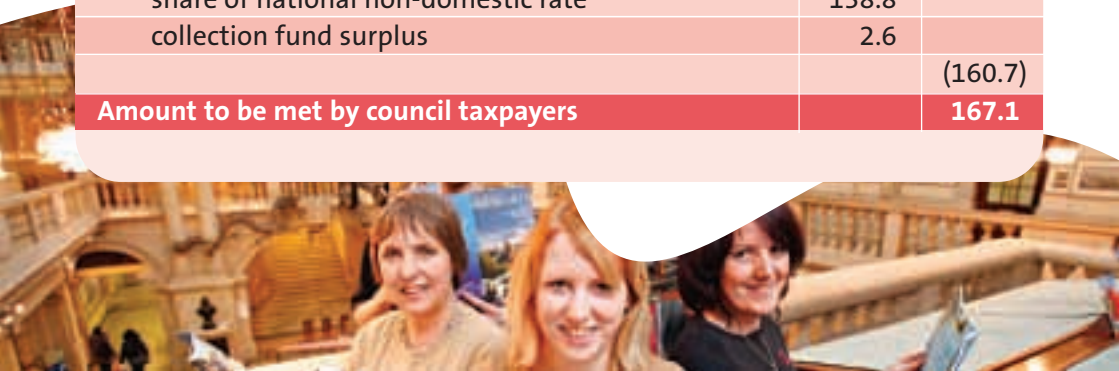
The amount of revenue support grant paid depends on the government's formula for assessing the relative needs of each council. The formula also includes an adjustment which recognises differences in the amount of local income which

individual council's have the potential to raise. Individual council's are guaranteed a minimum increase in grant, which is paid for by limiting increases above this level. Bristol's grant for 2008/09 is reduced by £7.2m as Bristol's contribution towards the cost of these minimum increases.

Bristol's formula grant for 2008/09 amounts to £158.1m and will meet around 48% of the council's net budget. The grant is 4.3% above the equivalent figure for 2007/08. This compares with a national increase of 3.5%. Spending on schools is funded separately by the government, through the Dedicated Schools Grant.

As well as central government grant, the total amount which council taxpayers are asked to meet also takes into account any council tax brought forward from the previous year (the collection fund surplus):

	£m	£m
Net budget requirement (see following page)		327.8
Less revenue support grant	19.3	
share of national non-domestic rate	138.8	
collection fund surplus	2.6	
		(160.7)
Amount to be met by council taxpayers		167.1



How does the council plan to spend the money

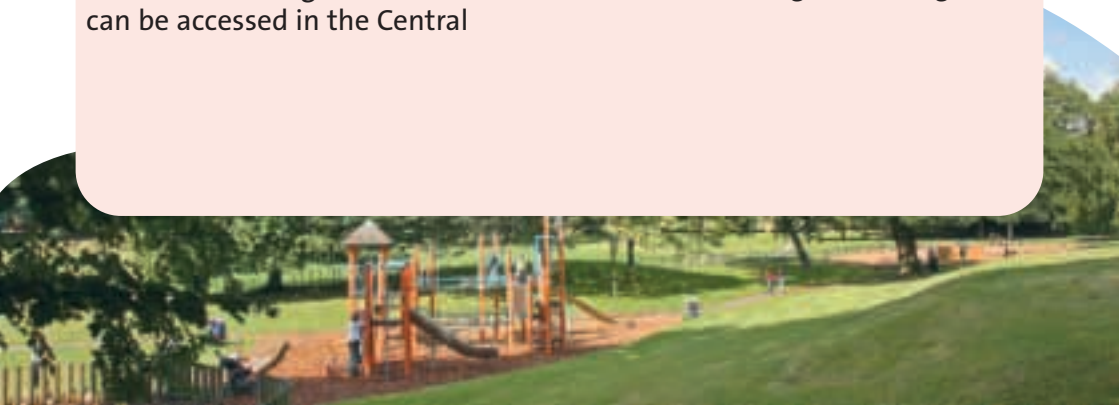
In the year beginning 1 April 2008, the council is planning to spend a

total of £327.8 million on the provision of services to the citizens of Bristol. The expenditure and income for each of the main services is set out below:

2007/08			Services	2008/09		
Total Spend	Income	Net Spend		Total Spend	Income	Net Spend
£m	£m	£m		£m	£m	£m
307.4	244.2	63.2	Children and young people's	317.1	250.3	66.8
153.2	53.8	99.4	Adult community care	157.4	49.6	107.8
40.1	18.2	21.9	Highways and transport	43.7	19.8	23.9
20.9	0.8	20.1	Refuse collection & disposal	27.1	3.1	24.0
43.9	12.6	31.3	Leisure & recreation	40.1	6.7	33.4
131.4	128.6	2.8	Housing & council tax benefits	134.4	131.5	2.9
123.0	74.0	49.0	Other services	129.7	74.1	55.6
819.9	532.2	287.7	Total spend on services	849.5	535.1	314.4
3.2	–	3.2	Contingencies	2.6	–	2.6
18.9	7.8	11.1	Capital financing costs	21.0	11.0	10.0
0.7	–	0.7	Land drainage/flood defence	0.8	–	0.8
842.7	540.0	302.7	Net budget requirement	873.9	546.1	327.8

More detailed information on the council's spending is contained in the Revenue Budget 2008/09. This can be accessed in the Central

Library, or via the council's website at
www.bristol.gov.uk/budget



Why has council spending increased over last year?

The council's net spending has

been fixed at £327.8 million for 2008/09. This compares with the 2007/08 budget of £302.7 million - an increase of £25.1 million, or 8.3%. The changes from 2007/08 are as follows:

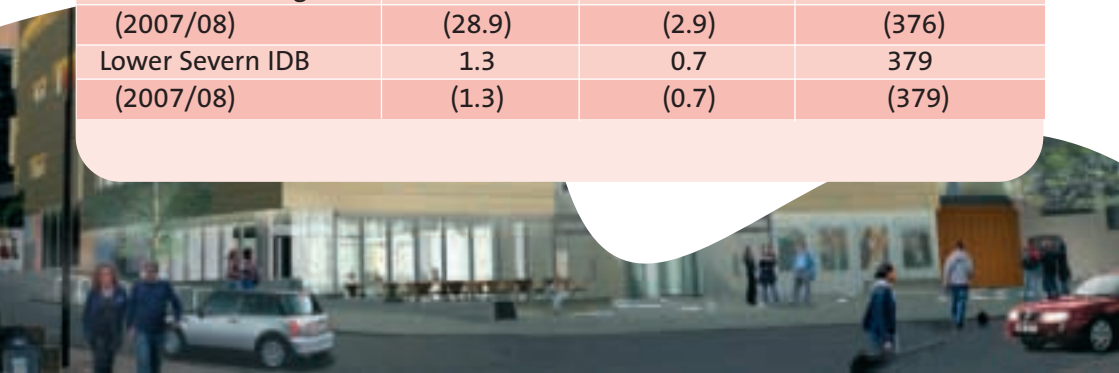
	£m	£m
Budget 2007/08		302.70
Additions:		
Pay and price inflation	8.53	
Effect of changes in specific government grant funding of certain services	7.46	
Net growth in spending on services	15.25	
Other adjustments	0.44	
		31.68
Reductions:		
Efficiency improvements		(6.53)
Budget 2008/09		327.85

Levies on the council

The Environment Agency and Lower Severn Internal Drainage

Board charge the council by way of a levy for flood defence and land drainage. Details are as follows:

	Gross Exp	Total levies Requirement	Levy on city council
	£m	£m	£'000
Environment Agency			
–Midlands Region	44.3	3.0	3
(2007/08)	(46.7)	(3.5)	(3)
–South West Region	34.6	3.0	390
(2007/08)	(28.9)	(2.9)	(376)
Lower Severn IDB	1.3	0.7	379
(2007/08)	(1.3)	(0.7)	(379)



Facts about your council tax bill

Council tax is based on two adults living in the property.

- If nobody is resident the bill may be reduced by up to 50%.
- Some properties could be 100% exempt even if they are occupied.
- Certain types of people may not be counted as adults living in the property for council tax purposes.

Discounts

The following people are not counted as adults living in the property for council tax purposes:

- Full-time students, student nurses, apprentices, youth training trainees and foreign language assistants.
- 18- and 19-year-olds who are at, or have just left, school or college.

- People who are severely mentally impaired.
- People in certain hostels or night shelters.
- Care workers on low pay usually for charities.
- People caring for a disabled person who is NOT a partner or child under 18.
- Members of religious communities.

People in detention (except those in detention for non-payment of council tax or a fine).

- Spouses of students where they are non-British subjects and are prevented by immigration regulations from taking paid employment or claiming benefits.
- Members and dependants of visiting forces.

You must tell us, within 21 days, of any change in circumstances that may affect your entitlement to an exemption or discount

Exemptions

Some homes are exempt from council tax. These include properties occupied only by students, people aged under 18 or people who are severely mentally impaired – or annexes occupied by a dependent relative. They also include empty properties which:

- are unfurnished (exempt for up to six months)
- are owned by a charity (exempt for up to six months)
- require or are undergoing structural alteration or major repair (exempt for up to twelve months).

If you own an empty property that you would like to bring back into use call the Empty Homes Team for free advice on 0117 914 1200.

Second homes

If you have an additional furnished property or a second home you may qualify for a discount on bills of 10%. However, there are certain circumstances – for example where the liable person is required to live in

job-related accommodation elsewhere as part of their employment—where the discount will be 50%.

Reduction for people with disabilities

If someone in your home needs an extra room or space to meet their special needs arising from a disability, you may be entitled to a reduced council tax bill. Your bill may be reduced by one band if your property is in band A, and you will be entitled to a reduction equivalent to one-ninth of the band D charge.

Council tax valuation bands

The Valuation Office Agency (VOA), part of the Inland Revenue and not the city council, has put every property into one of eight valuation bands. A full list of these bands is available on the VOA's website at www.voa.gov.uk

Your bill states which band applies to your home. The valuation is based on an estimate of how much it was worth on 1 April 1991.



Valuation band	Range of value	
A	Up to and including	£40,000
B	£40,001	£52,000
C	£52,001	£68,000
D	£68,001	£88,000
E	£88,001	£120,000
F	£120,001	£160,000
G	£160,001	£320,000
H	More than £320,000	

Appeals

You may appeal against the band in which your property has been placed if you are the new taxpayer for the property (within six months). Grounds are restricted and depend upon certain material changes in the property value. Information can be obtained from the Valuation Office Agency, 4th Floor City Point, Temple Gate, Bristol BS1 6PD. Tel 0117 930 2200.

You can appeal to the council if you think you are not liable to pay council tax, for example because you are not the resident or owner, or because your property is exempt. An appeal against your banding or your liability does not allow you to with-hold payment. If your appeal is successful you will be entitled to a refund of any overpaid tax.


Council tax benefit

You can claim benefit to help with your council tax, if you are on a low income and have less than £16,000 savings. Second adult rebate can be applied for if you do not have a partner but share your home with someone over 18 who is not paying rent and is on a low income.

If you are already receiving Council Tax Benefit, any new entitlement will be worked out automatically and should be shown on your bill. If you wish to notify us of a change in circumstances, please contact the Benefits Section.

Applications should be made as soon as possible, as we can only pay benefit from the Monday after the date of your claim.



A form can be obtained from any council area office or by ringing the Benefits Section (see page 18) or from the council website at  www.bristol.gov.uk/benefits


Facts about business rates

Non-domestic rates

Non-domestic rates, or business rates, collected by local authorities are the way that those who occupy non-domestic property contribute towards the cost of local services. Except in the City of London where special arrangements apply, the rates are pooled by central government and redistributed to local authorities as part of the annual formula grant settlement. The money, together with revenue from council taxpayers, revenue support grant provided by the government and certain other sums, is used to pay for the services provided by your local authority and other local authorities in your area.

Rateable value

Apart from properties that are

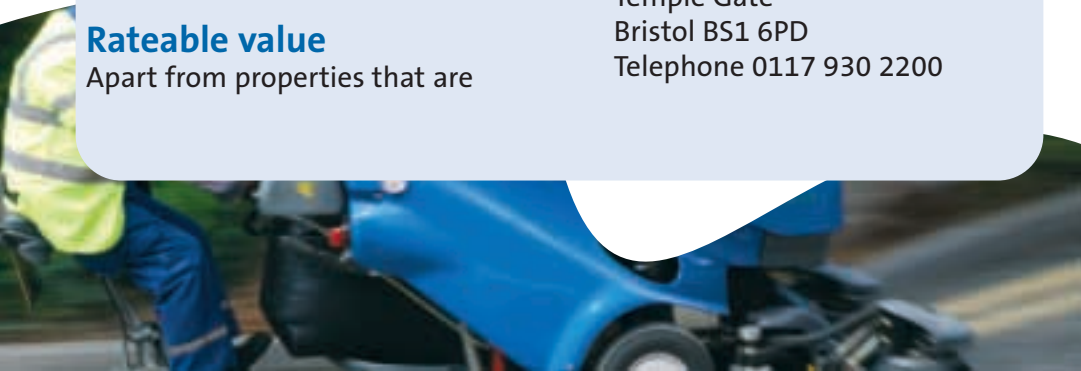
exempt from business rates, each non-domestic property has a rateable value which is set by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA), an agency of the HM Revenue and Customs. It draws up and maintains a full list of all rateable values, available on their website at  www.voa.gov.uk The rateable value of your property is shown on the front of this bill.

This broadly represents the yearly rent the property could have been let for on the open market on a particular date. For the revaluation that came into effect on 1 April 2005, this date was set as 1 April 2003.

The valuation officer may alter the value if circumstances change. The ratepayer (and certain others who have an interest in the property) can also appeal against the value shown in the list if they believe it is wrong.

Further information may be found on the VOA website or from:

- The Valuation Office Agency (Bristol)
4th Floor, City Point
Temple Gate
Bristol BS1 6PD
Telephone 0117 930 2200



National non-domestic rating multiplier

The local authority works out the business rates bill by multiplying the rateable value of the property by the appropriate multiplier.

There are two multipliers: the standard non-domestic rating multiplier and the small business non-domestic rating multiplier.

The former is higher to pay for small business rate relief. The government sets the multipliers for each financial year for the whole of England. The multipliers change each year in line with inflation and to take account of the cost of small business rate relief. In the year of a revaluation the multipliers are set at a level which will keep the total amount raised in rates after the revaluation the same as before, plus inflation for that year. The current multipliers are shown on the front of the bill.

Transitional arrangements

Property values normally change a good deal between each revaluation. Transitional arrangements help to phase in the effects of these changes by limiting increases in bills. To help pay for the limits on increases in bills, there also have to be limits on reductions in bills. Under the transition scheme, limits continue to apply to yearly increases and decreases until the full amount is due.

The scheme applies only to the bill based on a property at the time of the revaluation. If there are any changes to the property after 1 April 2005, transitional arrangements will not normally apply to the part of a bill that relates to any increase in rateable value due to those changes. Any transitional adjustments are shown on the front of this bill.

Further information about transitional arrangements and other reliefs may be obtained from Bristol City Council or the website:

 www.mybusinessrates.gov.uk



Unoccupied property rating

Business rates will not be payable in the first three months that a property is empty. This is extended to six months in the case of certain industrial properties. After this period, rates are payable in full unless the unoccupied rate has been reduced by the government by order. In most cases, the unoccupied property rate is zero for properties owned by charities and Community Amateur Sports Clubs. In addition, there are a number of exemptions from the empty rate. Full details on exemptions can be obtained from the local authority. If the unoccupied property rate for the financial year has been reduced by order, it will be shown on the front of this bill.

Partly occupied property relief

A ratepayer is liable for the full non-domestic rate whether a property is wholly occupied or only partly occupied. Where a property is partly occupied for a short time, the local authority has discretion in certain cases to award relief in respect of the unoccupied part.

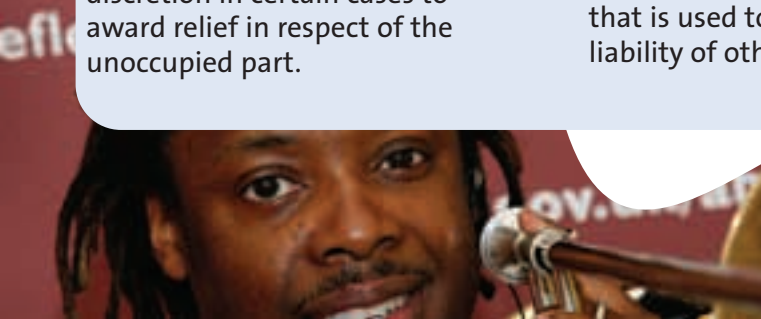
Small business rate relief

This relief is only available to ratepayers who apply to their local authority and who occupy either :

- a** one property, or
- b** one main property and other additional properties providing those additional properties each have rateable values less than £2,200.

The rateable value of the property mentioned in (a), or the total rateable value of all properties mentioned in (b), must be under £15,000 outside London or £21,500 within London on 1 April in the financial year in question, on the day for which relief is being sought, and each intervening day. If the rateable value, or total rateable value, increases above those levels, relief will cease from the day of the increase.

Ratepayers who satisfy these conditions will have the bill for their single or main property calculated using the lower small business rating multiplier rather than the ordinary rating multiplier that is used to calculate the liability of other businesses.



In addition, if the single or main property is shown on the rating list with a rateable value of up to £10,000, the ratepayer will receive a percentage reduction in their rates bill for this property of up to a maximum of 50% for a property with a rateable value of not more than £5,000.

If an application for relief is granted, provided the ratepayer's circumstances do not change, the application will not need to be renewed until the next revaluation of non-domestic premises, which happens every five years. Certain changes in circumstances must be notified to the local authority by the ratepayer (other changes will be picked up by the local authority). The changes which must be notified are:

- a** the ratepayer taking up occupation of a property they did not occupy at the time of making their application for relief; and
- b** an increase in the rateable value of a property occupied by the ratepayer in an area other than the area of the local authority which granted the relief.

Notification of these changes must be given to the local authority within 4 weeks of the day after the day the change happened. If this happens, there will be no interruption to the ratepayer's entitlement to the relief. A notification that the ratepayer has taken up occupation of an additional property must be by way of a fresh application for relief; notice of an increase in rateable value must be given in writing.

Full details on the eligibility criteria and on how to apply for this relief are available from the local authority

Charity and registered community amateur sports club relief

These are entitled to 80% relief where the property is occupied by the charity or club and is wholly or mainly used for charitable purposes or as a registered community amateur sports club. The local authority has discretion to give further relief on the remaining bill.



your library
is changing

Non-profit making organisation relief

The local authority has discretion to give relief to non-profit making organisations.

Hardship relief

The local authority has discretion to give relief in special circumstances.

Rating advisers

Ratepayers do not have to be represented in discussions about their rateable value or their rates bill. Appeals against rateable values can be made free of charge. However, ratepayers who do wish to be represented should be aware that members of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS – website: www.rics.org) and the Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation (IRRV – website: www.irrv.org.uk) are qualified and are regulated by rules of professional conduct designed to protect the public

from misconduct. Before you employ a rating adviser, you should check that they have the necessary knowledge and expertise, as well as appropriate indemnity insurance. Take great care and, if necessary, seek further advice before entering into any contract.

Paying your council tax or business rate



Pay by direct debit and avoid the risk of incurring recovery costs due to late payment. You are safeguarded by the direct debit guarantee that automatically allows the return of any payment to your bank account if either the city council or your bank makes an error

BENEFIT FRAUD

Benefit fraud is not a victimless crime. Every year benefit cheats are stealing from you. If you do suspect someone of claiming benefits they are not entitled to, ring the Fraud Hotline now on 0500 554535, giving as much information as possible.

All allegations are checked and all information is treated as anonymous.



You can pay at any of these outlets using your plastic payment card. A list of the outlets in the Bristol area is available on the Council Tax website



You can pay over the phone with a debit or credit card on 0870 7077776. This is a 24 hour service, available 7 days a week.

Details of all the payment methods available are shown on the back of your bill

Online services

As part of our continued commitment to improving customer access, facilities are available online for:

- seeing a statement of your account giving information about liability, payments, balances and reliefs

- enabling you to make payments via the Internet
- seeing detailed information about council tax and business rates via the council website, including e-forms for applications for certain relief, e-billing, enabling you to receive bills electronically.

How to contact us

■ Council tax or business rates

Write to Amelia Court, Pipe Lane, Bristol BS99 1ZG

Helpline 0117 925 0981

Fax 0117 975 5730

Minicom 0117 975 5785

email council.tax@bristol.gov.uk

business.rates@bristol.gov.uk

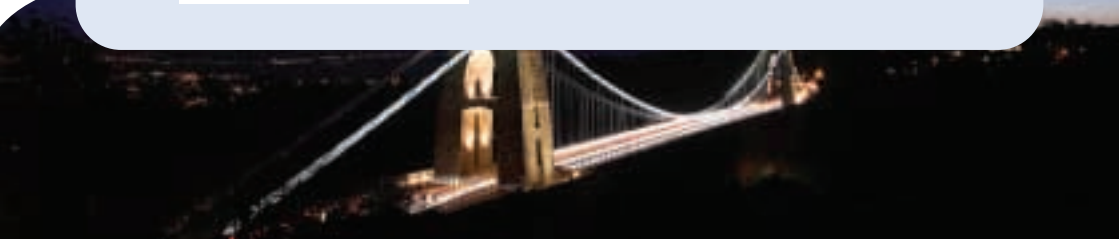
Website www.bristol.gov.uk

■ Council tax benefits

Write to The Benefits Section, PO Box 43, Bristol BS99 1BF

Tel 0117 903 7100

email www.benefits.enquiry@bristol.gov.uk



Key council services – contacting us online or by telephone

For online services, got to the council's website www.bristol.gov.uk and add the ending as listed below:

Service	Online service or information	Phone
Abandoned Vehicles	/vehicles	0117 922 3838*
Benefits – council tax and housing	/benefits	0117 903 7100
Business rate – information	/rates	0117 925 0981
Consumer advice	/tradingstandards	08454 040506
Council Tax – information	/counciltax	0117 925 0981
Council Tax and business rates – make a payment	/pay	0870 7077776
Fostering and adoption	/fostering	0117 954 8545
Homelessness - advice	/homelessness	0117 909 6000
Jobs with the council	/jobs	0117 922 4499
Leisure enquiries–inc arts, museums, parks, sports libraries and catalogue	/leisure	0117 922 3719
Libraries – automated renewal service	/librarycatalogue	0117 903 7240
Licensing	/licensing	0117 914 2500
Parking	/parking	0117 922 3091
Planning	/planning	0117 903 1221*
Pollution – noise, air, etc	/pollution	0117 922 3810*
Recycling and waste collections	/recycling	0117 903 1221*

Key council services (continued)

Register Office	/register	0117 903 8888
Road works helpline	/roadworks	0117 903 1212
Roads and pavements – repairs	/streetcare	0117 922 3838*
Schools admissions	/schooladmissions	0117 903 7696
Highways and drainage	/streetcare	0117 922 3838*
Social services for adults – Care Direct	/caredirect	0117 903 6685
Social services for children – child protection	/childprotection	0117 955 8231
Street lighting – faults	/lighting	0117 922 3838*
Traffic lights – faults	/trafficlights	0800 854229
Traffic management	/traffic	0117 903 6822

Visit www.bristol.gov.uk/services for our growing list of online services.

Services marked* are handled by our Customer Services Centre – open from 8.30am to 8pm weekdays.

The council's main switchboard number is 0117 922 2000.

Genuine out-of-hours emergencies relating to council services can be reported to 0117 922 2050.

Your councillor

Each electoral area of the city (ward) is represented on the council by two elected local councillors.

For details of how to contact your local councillor visit

📞 www.bristol.gov.uk/councillors or call 0117 922 2650.



AVON FIRE AUTHORITY AVON FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

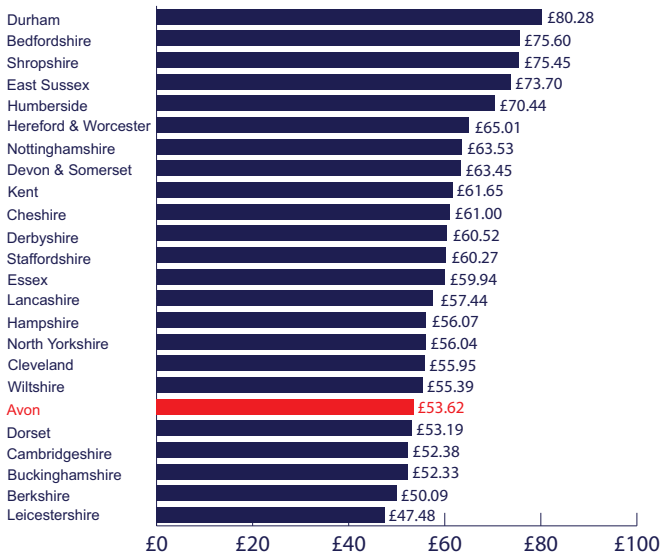
Our Mission: to improve public safety through preventing, protecting and responding.

We play a crucial role in protecting our communities by working hard to prevent emergencies happening. We also ensure that we are ready to respond to fire and other emergencies, whether they are a result of accidents, nature, or of terrorist activities.



For your FREE Home Fire Safety visit telephone FREE on 0800 1694 999

Council Tax 2007/08 Band D



For further information contact: Avon Fire & Rescue Service, Temple Back
Bristol, BS1 6EU Tel: 0117 9262061
www.avonfire.gov.uk

Annual budget

The Council tax for the Fire Authority for 2008/09 is set at £56.01 per Band D property. This represents an increase of 4.46% on last year. The Authority has set a budget at £44.912m.

The budget includes allowance for the cost of inflation, improvements to our service identified within our Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) and capital funding costs, together with costs associated with changes to uniform pay arrangements.

Spending Plans

	2007/08 (£m)	2008/09 (£m)
Total fire expenditure	45.658	47.257
Use of provisions	-0.540	-0.490
Income	-1.534	-1.855
Total	43.584	44.912
Revenue support grant	3.505	3.010
Share of NNDR	20.883	21.621
Council tax (£ per Band D property)	19.068	20.153
Collection fund surplus	0.128	0.128
Total	43.584	44.912

The main changes in spending from 2007/08 to 2008/09 are identified below.

Main changes in expenditure	(£m)
2007/08 Budget requirement	43.584
Inflation	1.051
Capital Financing/Lease charges	0.327
Use of provisions and reserves	-0.050
Total	44.912

Capital Requirements

The Authority has set a Capital Programme for 2008/09 of £2.850m, compared with £4.577m for 2007/08. The programme includes refurbishment and relocation of premises, vehicle replacement and support for home fire safety initiatives.

Capital Budget £m	2008/09 (£m)
Premises and IT	1.000
Vehicles	1.200
HQ and special projects	0.350
Community Fire Safety Initiatives	0.300
Total	2.850

Financed by £m	2008/09 (£m)
Borrowing	2.750
Government grant	0.100
Total	2.850

Where each pound goes



Home Fire Safety Visits

A working smoke alarm remains one of the most effective ways of reducing risk of serious injury or even death in fires that start in the home. The early warning they provide buys valuable seconds, allowing you to get out safely and call 999.

In our continued commitment to saving lives, last year Avon Fire & Rescue Service fitted 10,038 smoke alarms free of charge during Home Fire Safety Visits carried out at thousands of homes around the region.

Anyone can request a free Home Fire Safety Visit during which advice on all aspects of fire safety in the home will be provided. Staff from Avon Fire & Rescue Service will also fit smoke alarms free of charge during the visit. Smoke alarms for the deaf and hard of hearing are also available.

To request a visit call freephone 0800 1693 999, text 07781 482 627 if you are deaf or hard of hearing or visit www.avonfire.gov.uk

Know your escape route

Planning ahead could help save lives if a fire breaks out in your home.

Knowing what to do if your smoke alarm goes off and how you and your family would escape could make the difference between life and death.

Discuss and remember the following points:

- Your best, quickest and safest route out is the way you always come into your home but think about other ways out too.
- Keep your escape routes clear of obstacles.
- Know where door and window keys are kept.
- Staying put may be the safer option.
- If your escape route is blocked, find a suitable room, ideally with a window which opens, call 999 and stay there until help arrives.

Walk the route with your family and check everyone is able to operate any locks.



Providing a High Quality of Service

Improving the quality of service we provide to our communities remains our focus for 2008/09. Providing a high level of service to the public in every contact we have will help deliver improvements in overall performance.

During 2007 overall crime levels across the Avon and Somerset force area have continued to fall with particularly encouraging reductions in car crime. Burglary levels have risen however and the force is tackling this issue head on with a force wide campaign of enforcement and crime prevention. Crime detection levels continue to improve with the detection rate for 2007 now

hitting 25%. The aim will be to continue this momentum in the coming year.

April 2008 will see the official launch of Neighbourhood Policing across the country. Avon and Somerset Police Authority has been fully committed to this new style of delivering policing services to local communities. Along with community safety partners it has provided additional resources to ensure over 430 Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) are in place as part of the dedicated teams delivering safer, stronger neighbourhoods.

The Budget 2008/2009... And What it Means to You

The Budget for 2008/2009 strikes a balance between the continued improvement in performance across a range of local and national policing priorities, and the need to work within extremely challenging financial constraints. This budget particularly seeks to:-

- Maintain frontline police officer numbers,
- Protect the recent investment in Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) whilst continuing to develop funding partnerships for additional provision.
- Some continuing investment to increase capacity and resilience in tackling serious major crime.
- Continued improvement in our customer focus, particularly answering emergency and non-emergency calls.
- Equipping frontline officers with mobile information to help maximise the time they spend on frontline activity.
- Commence a review of our custody provision across Avon and Somerset.

The Authority recognises that council tax can be a burden, especially for those on a low income and so we are constantly striving to deliver efficiency savings and workforce modernisation.

Indeed the Authority has recently agreed to join Southwest One Limited, a partnership between the public and private sector to transform the way we do business and share our support services.

In 2008/2009 the Authority expects to spend £260.223 million (£249.590 million 2007/2008) on policing services for you and your local community.

The Police Council Tax Precept forms part of the overall council tax you pay and details are shown on the face of your council tax bill.

This represents a total cost of £2.97 per week to the average council taxpayer in Avon and Somerset including a rise of 4.86% for 2008/2009.

It is equivalent to £154.32 for the average Band D property.

This pays for a range of services which can be broadly categorised as:-

- Reducing Crime
- Investigating Crime
- Promoting Public Safety
- Providing Assistance to the Public



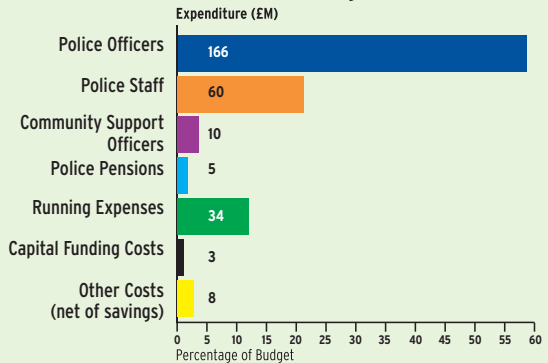
Down to detail

The following table shows the main reasons for the changes to the budget from 2007/2008 to 2008/2009 together with details of how the budget is financed.

	£m
Budget for 2007/08	249.6
Pay and Price Inflation	7.5
Commitments	2.2
New Spending Priorities	3.7
Efficiency Improvements and Savings	-2.8
Budget for 2008/09	260.2
which is financed by:	
Government support:	
- national business rates	60.6
- Government revenue support grant	8.4
- Home Office police grant	104.6
Contribution from balances	0.8
Surplus on earlier years Collection Funds	0.5
Balance to be met by Council Taxpayers	85.3
	260.2

Financial & statistical information 2008/09

The Revenue Budget 2008/09



The Authority has set a budget requirement after deducting income from specific grants, fees and charges of £260.2 million (£249.6 million in 2007/2008). The table shows that the majority of this is funded by Government and Home Office Grants with the balance being met from Council Tax. The resulting increase in the Police Authority Council Tax Precept is 4.86%.

Capital Investment

The Authority has agreed a capital programme for 2008/2009 of £15 million (£13.1 million 2007/2008).

The programme includes continued investment in national information and communication systems, improvements to police buildings, and replacement of police vehicles and equipment.

In agreeing the capital programme, the Authority has approved a borrowing level of £9.0 million (£3.5 million 2007/2008).

Details of the capital programme are as follows:

2007/2008	Details of Spend	2008/2009
£m		£m
3.6	Information and Communication Systems	4.5
5.7	Estates	2.6
3.4	Transport Services	4.0
0.4	Plant, Machinery and Equipment	0.4
0.0	Support Services Systems	3.5
13.1	Total Spend	15.0
2007/2008	Details of Funding	2008/2009
£m		£m
2.1	Capital Grants	2.6
3.5	Borrowing	9.0
1.1	Revenue Contributions	1.1
7.1	Capital Receipts	2.7
-0.7	Other Funding	-0.4
13.1	Total Funding	15.0



Latest Force Performance against 2007/08 Policing Plan Targets

Indicator	Performance	Change on previous year	Target
Satisfied with initial contact when reporting a crime	90%	+ 5%	93%
Satisfied with police actions at crime	77%	- 5%	85%
Satisfied with treatment by staff	91%	+ 3%	93%
Satisfied with follow-up service	62%	No change	70%
Satisfied with overall service	81%	No change	85%
Satisfaction rate of victims of racists incidents	70%	- 10%	85%
Domestic burglary per 1,000 households	13.6**	+ 18%	-10%
Robbery per 1,000 population	1.3**	0%	-10%
Theft of motor vehicles per 1,000 population	3.3**	- 15%	-10%
Theft from motor vehicles per 1,000 population	9.0**	- 12%	-10%
Total personal/household crime per 1,000 population	56.0**	- 8%	-15%
Life threatening and gun crime	470***	- 18%	577 or less
Detection rate for all crimes	25.2%	+ 0.8%	28%
Detection rate for domestic burglary	13.5%	- 0.9%	20%
Detection rate for robbery	20.3%	+ 1.6%	24%
Detection rate for theft of motor vehicles	16.0%	+ 2.2%	22%
Detection rate for theft from motor vehicles	7.4%	- 1.8%	12%
Detection rate for hate crime	38.8%	+ 4.1%	40%
Detection rate for violence against the person	42.5%	+ 0.6%	40%
Detection rate for rape	29.3%	+ 9.5%	26%
Fear of being the victim of a domestic burglary	1st Best*	No change	1st/2nd Best*
Fear of being the victim of a violent crime	1st Best*	No change	1st/2nd Best*
Fear of being the victim of a vehicle crime	4th Best*	No change	1st/2nd Best*
Concern over levels of anti-social behaviour	2nd Best*	- 1 place	1st/2nd Best*
Concern over local drug use/dealing	4th Best*	- 2 places	1st/2nd Best*
Fatalities or serious injuries resulting from road traffic collisions	663**	-1%	669 or less
Satisfaction with information available on local policing	43%	9%	38%
999 calls answered in 10 seconds	83%	- 3%	90%
Service Centre calls answered in 40 seconds	67%	+ 2%	90%
Urban emergency incidents attending in 10 mins	73%	- 1%	75%
Rural emergency incidents attending in 20 mins	84%	- 2%	90%

The above table shows the latest available 2007/08 performance information at 5 February 2008. Year end figures for 2007/08 will be available by visiting www.avonandsomerset.police.uk from April 2008.

* Ranking within the seven forces used by the Home Office to rank the Constabulary's performance.

** Annual estimate. *** Annual estimate of number of crimes



Objectives for 2008/09

After extensive local consultations, the following Policing Plan objectives have been set for 2008/09:

Confidence and Satisfaction

- To improve the quality of service to our customers
- To increase trust and confidence in policing, especially among minority communities.

Tackling Crime

- To reduce crime and increase the proportion of crimes where the offender is brought to justice.

Promoting Safety

- To increase visibility and contact with our communities
- To reduce local disorder and anti-social behaviour, in particular alcohol-related violence
- To respond to emergency calls for service within agreed standards
- To improve road safety.

Serious Crime and Protection

- To continue to play a leading role in the provision and development of protective services in the region
- To continue to tackle serious crime particularly organised crime involved in supplying illegal drugs or offences against children
- To play our full part locally and nationally in counter-terrorism strategies
- To ensure effective plans are in place with our partners to deal with serious incidents.

Organisational Management

- To use resources more efficiently to increase police officer time spent on local policing delivery
- To deliver a more representative workforce to reflect the diverse communities we serve
- To reduce sickness levels.

Performance Targets

Challenging performance targets have been set in the Policing Plan and the Constabulary's performance against these targets will be regularly monitored and publicised by the Authority.

The targets reflect the determination of both the Authority and the Constabulary to provide the highest possible quality of policing services and criminal investigation.

Crime reduction targets include reducing burglary by 15% and robbery and vehicle crime by 10%. In terms of detecting crime the target is to raise the overall rate to at least 29%.

In terms of satisfaction levels for the ease of contacting us, the target is to raise this from its current level of 90% to at least 93%.

Performance targets also include answering 90% or more of 999 calls within 10 seconds, and 75% or more non-emergency calls within 40 seconds.

A full copy of the 2008/2009 Policing Plan will be available on the Police Authority's website: www.aspol.org.uk from April 2008.

For further information

Budget questions

Treasurer to the Police Authority,
Valley Road,
Portishead,
Bristol BS20 8JJ.
Tel: 01275 816380
www.aspol.org.uk

Policing issues

Chief Constable
PO Box 37,
Valley Road,
Portishead,
Bristol BS20 8QJ.
Tel: 01275 816006
www.avonandsomerset.police.uk

Do you need help with your problems?

Community Legal Advice is a free and confidential advice service paid for by legal aid.

We can help with problems like **housing, education, debt and employment** as well as **benefits** and **tax credits**.



Looking for
a service
for children,
young people
or families
in Bristol?



The Children and Young People's Information Service helpline can be contacted for free impartial information on a wide range of childcare issues:

- Children's Centres
- Childminders
- Day Nurseries and Nursery Schools
- Parents and Toddler Groups
- Choosing a school
- Working Tax Credit
- ...and lots more!

email askcypis@bristol.gov.uk

Call on: **0845 129 7217**



Or use **1Big Database** – an online directory providing information on all services available for children and young people aged 0-19 in Bristol, South Gloucestershire and Bath & North East Somerset:

www.1bigdatabase.org.uk

Leisure
centres

Register
now for
your **FREE**
Everyone
Active
card

everyone ACTIVE

now at your local leisure centre

The Everyone Active card offers you:

- Access to a huge range of activities
- A choice of membership options
- Great savings and discounts

Whether you're thinking about family activities or you just want to be more active - don't be without your Everyone Active Card ... you'll feel better for it.

Call or visit your local centre now!

Easton Leisure Centre	0117 955 8840
Henbury Leisure Centre	0117 353 2555
Horfield Leisure Centre	0117 903 1643
Jubilee Swimming Pool	0117 903 1607
Kingsdown Leisure Centre	0117 942 6582
Bishopsworth Swimming Pool	0117 903 1600
Bristol South Swimming Pool	0117 966 3131
St Pauls Com. Sports Academy	0117 377 3405



SLH manages these facilities in partnership with Bristol City Council.



www.everyoneactive.com

everyone
ACTIVE

You'll feel better for it.